

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

CONGRATULATING THE GATOR
BOWL CHAMPION MISSISSIPPI
STATE UNIVERSITY FOOTBALL
TEAM

HON. GREGG HARPER

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 18, 2011

Mr. HARPER. Mr. Speaker, the Mississippi State University Bulldogs concluded their 2010 football season with a crushing 52–14 victory over the University of Michigan in the 66th annual Gator Bowl held on January 1, 2011. This commanding win marked Mississippi State's fourth consecutive bowl victory and capped the Bulldogs' 9–4 season as the No. 15 ranked team in the Associated Press Top 25 Poll.

Second-year Mississippi State head coach Dan Mullen crafted an explosive offensive performance led by junior quarterback Chris Relf, who completed 18 of his 23 pass attempts for 281 yards and three touchdowns. Relf also punched the ball in from the one-yard line bringing his totals to 311 yards and four touchdowns. The junior from Montgomery, Ala. honored defensive end Nick Bell by wearing his No. 36 jersey. Bell lost his short battle with cancer after starting two games this season, including his final game against Georgia where he tallied seven tackles.

Mississippi State junior running back Vick Ballard carried the ball for three scores, making the Pascagoula, Miss. native the first MSU player to record 19 touchdowns in one season.

Although Michigan led at the break, the Bulldog defense did not allow the Wolverines to score in the second half. The dominating defense held Michigan's Heisman hopeful quarterback to just 59-yards on the ground though he entered the post-season game averaging 136.9 rushing yards.

When it was all said and done, the Bulldogs finished 4–4 in the Southeastern Conference with wins over No. 22 Florida and their in-state rival Ole Miss. To boot, the four losses were to top-twelve teams.

I congratulate all of the players, coaches and fans for a phenomenal season and look forward to many great years of football in Starkville, Miss. I am extremely proud to represent Mississippi State University in the U.S. House of Representatives.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF HOUSE
REGARDING ARIZONA SHOOTING

SPEECH OF

HON. DIANA DeGETTE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 12, 2011

Ms. DeGETTE. Madam Speaker, it is under somber circumstances that this body gathers here today. On behalf of the people of Colo-

rado and the constituents I represent in the First District, we send our prayers and compassion to all who are mourning the events of last weekend and trying to come to terms with the grief this incident has caused.

As two of three women in the U.S. House of Representatives from the Rocky Mountain West, GABBY and I spoke often about the sometimes difficult task of staying close with family and loved ones, while shuttling back and forth across long distances between our homes and Washington. She has always been enormously dedicated to her family, and in the wake of this tragedy we see the love her family and community has shown her in return.

While GABBY was the victim with whom I shared a personal connection, the tragedy of last weekend runs far deeper than just reflecting on the attack on our colleague. What happened to GABBY and 19 others on that sunny Tucson morning, happened to all of us—to all Americans. The victims came from all walks of life, each one representing their own unique story, yet each one also reflecting in many ways, people we all know and love. From the young girl with dreams of changing the world; to the dedicated staffer committed to serving his country and helping the people of hometown; to the man willing to give his own life to save the life of the woman he loves; to the federal judge devoted to the cause of justice and law; to the retired woman escaping cold, snowy winters for warmer climes; to the wife of a former Marine quietly living out her Golden Years with her husband—all these brave souls unite us all in the common dreams and blessed experiences we hold as Americans.

Last Saturday, that unity was assaulted as a single, deranged gunman attempted to cut through the very bedrock of our democracy, by attacking an event at which a Member of Congress was performing her most fundamental responsibility—meeting with her constituents. The attack felt particularly heinous against a Member of this institution in which each of us have been asked by voters to serve largely because of its proximity to the people.

And while these events have understandably renewed discussions about congressional security, we must ensure that these efforts do not leave us insulated from our constituents. We each have an obligation to protect ourselves, our constituents, and our staff. But our professional obligation mandates that we remain accessible and inviting, because it is through us that the every American from Tucson, Arizona, to Portland, Maine, has a voice in the corridors of Washington, D.C.

Finally, it is important to remember that these were the actions of one individual clearly in need of mental health assistance. While it is too early to know what motivated him to violence, no one can deny that the level of political discourse in this country is not meeting the standard to which we should hold ourselves, nor meeting the standard our country's founders envisioned for our great nation. Far too often we have failed to find a way to, as Speaker BOEHNER put it last week, "disagree without being disagreeable."

It is my hope that the events of the past weekend serve as a wake-up call for everyone and remind us all that we need to reject extremism and violence, respect those who answer the call to public service, and strengthen our country with our every deed—just as those in Tucson have done since that fateful day.

GABBY is a friend and treasured colleague, and my deepest condolences extend to her family, as well as the friends and family of the constituents and staff members wounded or killed in the unspeakable attacks of January 8, 2011. God bless them; God Bless this Body, and God Bless the United States of America.

RECOGNIZING MAJOR GERARD
ACOSTA

HON. BEN RAY LUJÁN

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 18, 2011

Mr. LUJÁN. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize and pay tribute to MAJ Gerard "Gerry" Acosta, United States Army, on the occasion of his departure from the Army House Liaison Office to pursue Command and General Staff College studies at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. I, and many other members of this chamber, have had the pleasure of working with him over the past 3 years that he has served as a part of the U.S. Army Office of Legislative Affairs and as a Liaison Officer in the Army Liaison Office in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Major Acosta has had a remarkably varied and successful career. He was born in the Panama Canal Zone, Panama. As a military brat, Major Acosta grew up in Central and South America, eventually residing in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. In 1997, after completing the United States Military Academy Preparatory School and Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, and 2 years at the United States Military Academy, Gerry had to transfer to the University of Florida to support a family emergency. In 1999, Gerry graduated, with a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry and a minor in Chemical Engineering Design. After completion of the Reserve Officer Training Corps, Major Acosta was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Quartermaster Branch and branch-detailed to the Infantry.

Major Acosta's initial assignment was to Fort Lewis, Washington, where he served as a Motor Platoon Leader, Company Executive Officer, and later Assistant Brigade Logistics Officer (S-4) in the 3d Brigade, Second Infantry Division. Major Acosta then attended the Combined Logistics Career Course and Petroleum Officer Course in Fort Lee, Virginia. Upon completion of his courses, Major Acosta served 13 months as an Aide-de-Camp to the Commanding General of Army Material Command, Southeast Asia in Camp Arifjan, Kuwait and Bagram, Afghanistan.

Upon his return to the United States, Major Acosta served 31 months as a Quartermaster Direct Support Company Commander in the

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